

**SPORTS**

**State's ongoing wildlife restoration is bringing back the wild turkey**

**By Norm Minick**  
The Thanksgiving holidays bring many things to mind - too much food, family gatherings, and good hunting and sharing stories about the hunt season. And, at some time or the other, almost everybody talks about turkeys.

The wild turkey, the symbol of Thanksgiving since our country was first settled, will stand as a reminder of the good things in life.

Today, through an ongoing program, this prairie species is once again populating many areas of Kentucky where for many years it had practically vanished.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' effort to restore the wild turkey is progressing steadily in the forests of the commonwealth.

Started in 1973, the restoration program to repopulate the state with wild turkeys has provided a hunting opportunity that had been nonexistent for many years.

More counties are opened each year to turkey hunting as stocking practices and natural reproduction occurs.

Approximately 25 counties or portions of counties will be open for turkey hunting during the 1988 spring season.

Newly stocked counties usually remain closed for five years to allow the birds to reproduce and flourish in a suitable population.

According to Turkey Program Coordinator George Wright, a total of 1,570 birds have been released at 48 sites since the restoration began.

The result so far has been an increase in population from 2,000 birds in 1973 to 15,000 turkeys in 1987. Harvest figures show an increase from 24 birds taken in 1978 to 623 birds taken in 1987.

"It's a slow process, but the program is progressing well both in terms of turkey population and hunter success rates," said Wright.

Hunters success has increased from 2.6 percent to 15.2 percent over the last 15 years.

"I think it's entirely possible that we could have 100,000 turkeys in the state in 20 years and that turkey hunting will be available in practically every county in Kentucky," Wright added.

The most important factor in a successful turkey restoration program is cooperation from sportsmen.

"Illegally taking turkeys out of season or in closed counties is the quickest way to afflict the program's effectiveness."

If the turkeys are protected and

left alone after stocking, hunting opportunities will be available sooner.

It defies our purpose to have birds poached that are stocked to populate an area," said Wright.

The Kentucky Chapter of the Wild Turkey Federation has a standing offer of \$500 for information leading to the conviction of anyone who illegally takes a wild turkey.

Poaching caused the closure of Crittenden County during the 1987 spring season.

The amount of sport takes on restoration grids is tracked and

made an apartment's attitude and the availability of turkeys for stocking.

Wright is expecting a good stocking year in 1988 as well as another good turkey season in April.

With sportsmen's cooperation and careful management, turkey hunting may again reach the level our forefathers enjoyed.

Bringing home "Old Tom" from the woods instead of the grocery may once again be a tradition and another item for which we can give thanks.



Mike King poses with an eight-point buck he shot in Carrolton, the Mike King.



Don Rehrig shot this coyote while he was hunting around Harroville Road last week. He estimated the coyote at weighing around 50-60 pounds. Chip Miller Photo.

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**GENERAL NEWS**

**State releases snow removal plan**

U.S. 68, KY 36, KY 1455 first

State Transportation road crews are prepared for the 1987-88 winter maintenance program as they begin to clear snow and ice from the roads.

This year, again, we want to be able to travel safely when adverse weather strikes," said Governor Martha Layne Collins.

The help motorists plan their winter driving, the Transportation Cabinet has announced which roads will be cleared first.

The transportation crew will clear U.S. 68, KY 28 and KY 1455 first.

The next roads to be cleared will be priority B and then priority C, as shown on the attached map. The roads are cleared as soon as precipitation becomes significant.

U.S. 68, KY 36, KY 1455 first

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**Pre travel planning a must for holidays**

KSP gives tips

Before you set out on your holiday travels, be sure you are prepared for the problems that may be ahead of you.

Holiday travel can be dangerous due to the increased traffic and unpredictability of the weather.

Always make sure you have checked the weather forecast before you start your trip.

Because weather can change rather quickly, it is a good idea to make sure that you check the forecast just before departing.

Friday suggested that you carry a winter storm kit in your car.

Such a kit might include blankets or sleeping bags, matches and candles, empty 3-pound coffee cans with plastic cover, facial tissue, paper towels, extra clothing, high reflector snacks, compass and road map, first aid kit, knife, shovel, and sand flashlight or signal light, windshield scraper and booster tabs.

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